

Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Annual Report

Washoe-Storey Conservation District

September 30, 2008

Major activities undertaken and performed in this fiscal year are:

1. Crane Ditch Clean-Up Project
2. Parkview Terrace B Project
3. Hidden Meadows Steamboat Creek Restoration Appraisal Study
4. Capacity Building

Crane Ditch Clean-Up Project:

The project would address the known problems in and around the segment of Crane Ditch that travel through and around Curti Ranch Units 3-9 between Highway 342 and Steamboat Ditch. These problems have been identified by the LMA Curti Ranch II Management Association, the City of Reno and local residents.

This segment of Crane Ditch is choked with debris and trash. The embankments are eroded and destabilized, and the borders of the adjacent bike path are heavily littered with pet waste. Infrastructure was constructed between 2004 and 2007 in Units 3 – 9, and the storm drains empty directly into the ditch with none of the water quality treatment which is now required but the City of Reno LID Ordinance in 2008 for new development and redevelopment.

Untreated runoff from the streets of Curti Ranch (and all urban runoff) contains pollutants at least some of the time in the form of nutrients, pathogens, hydrocarbons, toxic organics and sediments from sources such as lawn care (fertilizers, pesticides and mulches), animal waste, detergents, vehicle fluids and hydrocarbon deposition.

Phase 1 of the project would address the pollutants entering the Crane Ditch by providing for the design and implementation of two models of Low Impact Development (LID) water treatment structures or features. Two current outfall locations would be retrofitted in compliance with the new City of Reno LID Ordinance in the form of two of the three following types of structures: wet vault, media filtration system or landscape filtration system. The effectiveness of the retrofit would be evaluated and modified if necessary to create LID retrofit solutions for existing communities in the Truckee Meadows.

Phase 1 of this project would be funded by a grant from Truckee River Fund in addition to matching funds from the Curti Ranch II Management Association LMA, and would consist of seven components: sampling and analysis for pollutant sources, clean up and removal of debris, erosion control, riparian restoration and revegetation, infrastructure to mitigate future pollution, LID treatment retrofit design, install and assessment at two outfall locations, community outreach and education, and LID features maintenance and ongoing waste removal program.

Park View Terrace B:

Park View Terrace B is a multifamily development located in north Reno, and is projected to start in September of 2008. The scope of the project will be to place rock in the portion of the channel that can not drain because the outlet pipe is higher than the area that ponds water, which could lead to mosquito breeding if nothing is done to eliminate the standing water in the drain. In addition, trees including 50 shrubs irrigated for a least one year planted at the toe of the slope of the channel and within the project area where the rock is placed in the channel. The 4 inches of rock along with the planting of trees and shrubs will keep the water subsurface with the plants utilizing this excess water. The xeriscape buffer provides conservation of water and reduces the sediment and erosion flow to the channel providing conservation elements. The low flow channel allows the conveyance of urban water runoff to the outlet instead of ponding in the low area of the channel.

Hidden Meadows Steamboat Creek Restoration Appraisal Study

Ongoing funding from the Washoe County Regional Water Planning Commission has enabled the Washoe-Storey Conservation District (District) to extend its contract with Kennedy-Jenks Consultants to further a stream restoration project. This contract is to appraise the Hidden Meadows reach of Steamboat Creek to understand the engineering, environmental and institutional constraints, meet with relevant stakeholders, and identify potential funding sources.

One important milestone was to hold a joint meeting with all the stakeholders known to the District, both public representatives and private landowners, to better understand the prospective of each, identify their goals and objectives, and find contributions that each were willing to make toward the project's successful completion.

Capacity Building

Several new board members have joined the District Board over the last two years and are rapidly gaining knowledge and experience, as well as bringing diverse talents and experience to the District. A near term need is meeting to re-identify long term strategic objectives the Board should pursue, and how to make them actionable.

Noxious weeds, stream restoration, water quality and water control (water resources management) are high on our list. Specific problems needing more attention include boron and mercury in the waters and soils of Steamboat Creek, overgrazing and poor land use practices, and adverse effects of irrigation return water as well as stormwater runoff.

Because our District still contains significant remnants of an agricultural economy (ditches, farms, grazing lands, etc.), while in transition from rural to urban land use and demographics, the board is looking for public relations representation, preferably a corporate representative from a government agency.